

Carter Family Memorial Music Center to Expand With Property Purchase

The Carter Family Memorial Music Center, Inc., has purchased property on the A. P. Carter Highway across from the Carter Fold in Hiltons, VA, it was announced November 2nd. Formerly the home of the late Pauline Shaffer, the property includes 2.15 acres with some level property along the highway, a one story five-room house, and two small outbuildings. Pauline Shaffer was a lifelong neighbor of Janette Carter, and their children grew up together.

This acquisition will solve several pressing problems of the growing Music Center, according to the executive director, Rita Forrester. “We will be able to offer more parking,” she said, “and the house and other buildings will provide much needed space for offices and storage.” Rita has served as executive director of the Carter Fold since Janette Carter’s death in 2006, continuing the traditions set by her mother.



The purchase virtually doubles the acreage of the Carter Family Memorial Music Center property, which includes the 822-seat Carter Fold, the newly renovated Carter Family Museum, the A. P. Carter birthplace cabin, and areas for parking. Average attendance at the weekly music shows is 400. Annually, about 30,000 people attend events there.

Howard Klein, president of the not-for-profit Music Center said, “The board is most fortunate to be able to make this property part of the Carter Music Center. It will meet current needs and allow for the organization’s growth into the future, thereby assuring that the work started by Janette Carter will continue for many years.”

The Music Center grew out of the 1974 concerts that Janette Carter began presenting in her father, A. P. Carter’s grocery store and was founded as a nonprofit organization in 1979. Over the past 30 years the Music Center has presented weekly concerts, special events and an annual multi-day Festival. It is an all-volunteer organization.

As Janette Carter wrote in founding the organization, The Carter Family Memorial Music Center’s mission is to

- Preserve and further Old-Time music played on acoustical instruments;
- Carry on the work, goals, ideals, education, traditions and musical heritage of Sara, Maybelle and A. P. Carter;
- Present live performances of Old-Time music which tend to express the heart and emotion of the performer, above all else, the heart must be kept in this music, and the commercialism out;
- Educate the public in the art of Old-Time music through concerts, lectures, publications, movies and other means and media that are desirable;
- Organize and maintain, support and operate a museum and archives to preserve the music and the names, memory and history of those pioneers of Old-Time acoustical music.